

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (cancelled).
2. (previously amended). The method of Claim 19 wherein the protective material comprises a water-soluble polyacrylamide.
3. (previously amended). The method of Claim 19 wherein the protective material is derived from a polyacrylamide material and the protective material is applied to a silane adhesion promoter layer as the first layer.
4. (previously amended). The method of Claim 19 comprising applying a silane adhesion promoter material to the first surface of the wafer before applying the protective material to the wafer.
5. (original). The method of Claim 4 wherein the protective material comprises a polyacrylamide material.
6. (previously amended). The method of Claim 19 wherein slot forming step is conducted using a grit blast material selected from alumina and silicon carbide.
7. (previously amended). The method of Claim 19 wherein the first layer comprises a silane adhesion promoter layer and a photoresist layer and the protective layer comprises a polyacrylamide layer, further comprising substantially removing the polyacrylamide layer subsequent to the slot forming step to provide a wafer containing the silane layer and the photoresist layer.
8. (cancelled).
9. (cancelled).
10. (cancelled).

11. (cancelled).

12. (cancelled).

13. (previously amended). The method of Claim 20 wherein the grit blasting step is conducted using a grit blast material selected from alumina and silicon carbide.

14. (previously amended). The method of Claim 20 wherein the first layer comprises a photoresist layer and the second layer comprises a polyacrylamide layer applied to the photoresist layer.

15. (original). The method of Claim 14 further comprising removing substantially all of the polyacrylamide layer after grit blasting the wafer.

16. (original). The method of Claim 15 wherein the grit blasting step is conducted using a grit blast material selected from alumina and silicon dioxide.

17. (previously amended). The method of Claim 20 wherein the first layer comprises a photoresist material having a thickness ranging from about 1 to about 10 microns.

18. (original). The method of Claim 17 wherein the second layer has a thickness ranging from about 20 to about 25 microns.

19. (previously added) In a method for forming one or more slots in a silicon wafer containing a first surface and a second surface opposite the first surface, the improvement comprising the steps of:

forming a substantially permanent non-water soluble first layer on the first surface of the wafer from a material selected from the group consisting of silane materials, photoresist materials, and a combination of silane and photoresist materials;

applying a water-soluble protective material to the first layer to form a protective second layer thereon;

forming one or more slots in the silicon wafer extending through the wafer from the first surface to the second surface thereof; and  
removing the water-soluble second layer from the wafer.

20. (previously added) In a method for making ink jet printheads from a silicon wafer having a device surface side and one or more ink feed vias grit blasted therein for ink feed to the device surface side thereof, the ink jet printheads including nozzle plates attached to the device surface side of the wafer, providing nozzle plate/chip assemblies, and TAB circuits or flexible circuits electrically connected to the nozzle plate/chip assemblies, the improvement comprising:

spin coating a substantially water-insoluble first material on a the device surface side of a silicon wafer to form a first layer thereon, the first material being selected from the group consisting of a silane material, a photoresist material, and a combination of silane material and photoresist material;

spin coating onto the first layer a substantially water-soluble protective material to provide a second layer on the first surface of the wafer;

grit blasting one or more ink vias in the wafer extending from a second surface thereof to the device surface side of the wafer; and

removing substantially all of the second layer from the wafer.